

March 2, 2010

TO: ALL POTENTIAL PROPOSERS

RE: RFP No. 2033-10-07

"Monitoring, Verification, and Provide On-line Reports for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009"

Questions & Answers

1. Q: Does Shaw still have the previous agreement in place?

A: Shaw is the contractor for the previous RFP associated with the American Recovery Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) grants.

2. Q: Is Shaw or, any other company currently operating the interim reporting solution for DNR? If so, who? And when does it expire?

A: DNR is working with Shaw for any reports that it currently needs within the framework of the work provided in the above agreement. That will continue, these reports would be other reports that may be requested regarding the use of these grants.

3. Q: Would DNR accept a proposal that "shares" the amount saved below the 32 month not to exceed cap of \$1,282,495 (which equates to \$40,078 per month?)

A: No, this is a federally funded grant.

4. Q: Will a non Louisiana domiciled, non-D/WBE and SBRA company be eligible to win an award? Or, will there be some obligation to either prime or sub-contract with an eligible local vendor (D/WBE,SBRA).?

A: Anyone is eligible to apply.

5. Q: Would DNR consider a collaborative pilot (at no incremental expense to DNR) that includes the Dept. Of Energy ARRA reporting group to create a best practices case study model for other states to learn from?

A: **It would be considered.**

6. Q: RFP Enclosure 4, Scope of Services, Page 2 of 3, Paragraph 4 it is stated herein that “potential contractors should verify the energy saving achieved for projects using metrics provided by DNR that have been approved by the US DOE”. Will DNR require the proposer to show an energy efficiency engineer on the program team to meet the requirements of the energy savings audit function?

A: **The proposer is free to provide that verification in whichever way they deem fit as long as the individual(s) doing the verification are qualified. The qualifications of those doing the work will be considered in the decision making process.**

7. Q: Programs covered–In the title of Enclosure 4–Scope of Services, the following three programs are listed: 1. State Energy Program, 2. EECBG, & 3. State Energy Efficient Appliance Rebate Grant. Within the first paragraph, only the State Energy Program and EECBG program are listed. Does the State Energy Efficient Appliance Rebate fall within one of these two programs? If so, which one?

A: **Portions of the Appliance Rebate fall within the State Energy Program; however, the entire Appliance Rebate program will operated by the same vendor. The monitoring, verification, and reporting needs will address the entire program.**

8. Q: Does Program 1, 2-A, 2-B, 2-C, 3, & 4 in Attachment B make up the State Energy Program? Are any of these programs excluded from this RFP?

A: **None of these programs are excluded from this RFP.**

9. Q: The contract initiation date is listed as starting March 1, 2010, yet proposals aren’t due until March 15, 2010. Will the end dates of the contract still be September 13, 2012 and April 30, 2012 if the initiation date is delayed?

A: **The end dates will remain the same.**

10. Q: Is the contractor verifying energy savings achieved by use of data supplied by the grantee and/or implementation contractor?

A: **DNR and Shaw are working together to implement the grants; therefore, the data supplied could be provided by either party. Additionally, the proposal is requesting that actual verifications also be conducted. A sampling method is acceptable as long as it is risk based.**

11. Q: Will the contractor be required to verify on-site data (i.e. ratings of equipment installed, insulation, etc.) for any of the programs?
- A: **Yes, on-site monitoring will also be used for these programs. A sampling method is acceptable.**
12. Q: What are the existing data sources and database formats used to extract reporting information?
- A: **DNR maintains a custom developed Oracle based DBMS application. All reporting done using Oracle reports and other Oracle tools such as Oracle Discoverer.**
13. Q: The RFP states “real-time” information. If this is the case, is there continuous data given through the use of databases currently with the DNR?
- A: **The most current information will be available within the databases being used.**
14. Q: Does DNR expect the reports to be generated based on filtering and choices made by the end user (tied directly to database sources)?
- A: **Yes. Reports need to fit the end user(s) needs. The information needed should be in the database.**
15. Q: How many existing data sources are used to report on metrics currently? What formats are these sources (SQL, MS Access, Excel, etc.)?
- A: **The reports to outside sources, federalreporting.gov and the various US Department of Energy sites use the formatting that each request/require. [Federalreporting.gov](http://federalreporting.gov) uses an excel spreadsheet. The US DOE reports are through software they require. DNR is the responsible party for reporting to those groups, it is not a requirement that your software meet those needs.**
16. Q: Is there a current domain you are using to host reporting data and accessibility?
- A: **All DNR application and reporting is web based using www.dnr.louisiana.gov. The proposer shall develop all their reports using their web based application. DNR may add a link to DNR web page to proposers web site for reports developed by the proposer..**
17. Q: If the website and data sources are expected to remain at DNR, will the proposed contractor be able to access both remotely?
- A: **The website and data sources can remain with the winning bidder or DNR, but either party should be able to access remotely. Following the conclusion of the contract, the information should remain available for DNR’s use through all necessary audit cycles.**

18. Q: Could the proposer provide the domain and/or host the website application offsite on a secure server with a dedicated T1 connection?
- A: **Yes, the proposer shall host their web based monitoring application at their preferred site following the RFP guidelines. No off-shore hosting permitted.**
19. Q: What web application is the current system on (SharePoint, ASP.net, Html, Flash, etc.)?
- A: **DNR maintains a custom developed Oracle based DBMS application using Oracle Designer tools (all applications are generated automatically by the Designer). All reporting are done using Oracle reports and other Oracle tools such as Oracle Discoverer.**
20. Q: How is the current/existing reporting for DNR accomplished? What applications are used (i.e. Excel, PDF's, PowerPoint, etc.)?
- A: **The current reports have been provided in Excel, WINSAGA, PAGE, and other US DOE reporting formats.**
21. Q: What are your technical support requirements? Can support be provided remotely?
- A: **Proposer support to provide support for their system. DNR maintains and support its own system. DNR will provide VPN connection to proposer for data exchange.**
22. Q: Please define the role of the "implementation contractor" referred to on Page 2 of the Scope document. Is the implementation contractor implementing a financial system for DNR under a separate project than is addressed in this RFP?
- A: **The implementation contractor, Shaw, is helping with guidance and implementation. There are no other systems being put in place other than in Shaw's proposal to the RFP.**
23. Q: Will the implementation contractor be responsible for designing and implementing the internal control systems for the ARRA grand administration?
- A: **The implementation contractor is designing/implementing the internal controls for the ARRA grant administration.**
24. Q: Will the contractor selected for this project be responsible for providing the reports and information defined by the implementation consultant to meet the requirements of the internal controls systems?
- A: **The reports provided by the contractor in this RFP are for DNR use and external users. The internal control system for Shaw transactions is to be examined in the fiscal monitoring.**

25. Q: Will the contractor on this project be responsible for designing any of the internal control systems for the ARRA grant administration?

A: **No, monitoring those controls only - though this would include any findings/areas of concern.**

26. Q: The second paragraph on page 2 of Enclosure, Scope of Services, describes contractor duties as follows: "Potential contractors should verify the energy savings achieved for projects using the metrics provided by DNR that have been approved by the US DOE. The verification will also include examination of jobs created and retained as it meets the definitions associated with all ARRA Stimulus funds...The metrics verification will be conducted on an ongoing basis. The contractor will keep DNR staff fully informed of all findings or areas of concern."

Does such verification encompass both "implementation contractor" information and grantee/construction site information sources for both energy and jobs metrics evaluations?

A: **Yes. Additionally, the winner of this contract would also be responsible for providing the jobs numbers for their business following current federal reporting guidelines.**

27. Q: Can you **please advise** which programs in Attachment B are included in the scope of services for 2033-10-07.

Of the six programs listed in the Attachment B, two appear to be included in the (SOS)/Enclosure 4 as listed in the first paragraph.

Are all six programs included in the Scope of Services or if not, please advise whether there will be other contractors or future RFPs for those programs.

A: **All programs listed in Attachment B are to be included. No future RFPs for monitoring and verification of these programs are planned at this time.**

28. Q: In Enclosure 4 Scope of Services (SOS) the first paragraph breaks out the maximum cost for the State Energy Program Grant and for the EECBG Program Stimulus Grant. However, it doesn't mention the maximum cost associated with the Energy Star Appliance Rebate Grant. Is there a maximum?

A: **The State Energy Program Grant will incorporate the cost associated with the Energy Star Appliance Rebate grant.**

29. Q: We noted on your website that The Shaw Group was named as the *Professional Turn Key Consulting Firm to assist in the implementation of the ARRA State Energy* program. To meet our obligations for disclosures of conflicts, please advise if this is the only vendor involved.

If others-Please provide the firms' name and address.

- A: **The Shaw Group is the vendor involved. There is a third party vendor that will be contracted through Shaw for the Appliance Rebate program; however, that vendor has not been named at this time. The parish governments will be sub-recipients as well.**
30. Q: If the Shaw Group (and others, if applicable) has developed written internal controls for each program, we would like a copy of those in order to assess the amount of work required for review of those controls.
- A: **The internal controls for these programs are currently being established. There is not a copy of them available at this time.**
31. Q: How many potential sub-recipients does DNR expect?
- A: **It is anticipated that there could be up to 30,000 sub-recipients. The appliance rebates and household/business retrofits will account for the vast majority of these sub-recipients; however, only about 29% of the cost.**
32. Q: Does DNR anticipate that the sub-recipients would input fiscal, energy efficiency/savings, and job creation/retention information directly into the web-based tool described in the RFP?
- A: **The sub-recipients will report the information to Shaw and/or DNR. The web-based tool can pull from this information or have sub-recipients input that information. That development is at the discretion of the proposer for this RFP.**
33. Q: Will there be a pre-proposal conference for this RFP?
- A: **No.**
34. Q: In reference to: Enclosure (1), Page 1, Item 5: Ownership of Documents:
- As a CPA firm, we are required to retain documentation of all of our audits. This information may be reviewed by other CPA firms or licensing or certification agencies as part of a peer review process. They are also subject to review by government oversight agencies. Will DNR permit retention of a copy of the audit working papers by the successful proposer?
- A: **Yes**

35. Q: In reference to: Enclosure (1), Page 6, Item 10:

Where may we obtain a list of these enterprises and businesses in order to contact them?

What is the minimum number of solicitors that must be made to such businesses?

A: www.sba.gov (Small Business Administration) Search for disadvantaged business enterprises. There is no minimum number of solicitors.

36. Q: In reference to Enclosure (2), Page 3, Item A.9:

Many hotels and car rental companies do not recognize government contractors as eligible for State-government negotiated rates. They often charge higher rates for contractors or refuse them any government-related discount. Will DNR provide a letter to the successful proposer that enables them to get the State-negotiated rate from hotel chains?

A: DNR will be happy to provide a letter that states that you are contracting with us for this project; however, it will up to the hotel/rental car company to choose to accept that for a government related discount.

37. Q: In reference to Enclosure 4:

Has DNR begun reporting ARRA measures to the federal government yet? If not, when is the initial report due?

A: Yes, some reports are due 10 days after the end of the quarter and some are due monthly.

If the metrics to be reported change, will prior periods need to be re-stated and re-verified?

A: To date, when reporting instances have changed, it has not been required to be re-stated or re-verified. This would appear to be acceptable throughout; however, if the project is a long term project and the metrics change, it is feasible that the reports for those items could need to be updated.

Is the successful proposer required to submit the same information (jobs created/retained, etc.) that the grantee vendors/sub-recipients are required to submit?

A: Yes

What reports, in addition to those required by ARRA, are envisioned? Please provide more detail so we can estimate the cost of gathering that information and producing the reports.

A: For reporting purposes, those reports are contingent upon what various legislators may request or other end users in the state that may be interested in breaking down the program. However, it will also be important to provide desired reports to show monitoring and verification coverage as well.

Please elaborate on the type of visuals DNR envisions accompanying the reports so that we may better estimate the cost of providing them.

A: It is possible that reports could be geared to legislative or congressional districts by grant or project. However, other reports could be requested by other parties that DNR needs to communicate with.

38. Q: In reference to Enclosure 4:

Where does DNR expect that the reporting requirement capability and underlying data for the reports will reside and/or be hosted to allow for web access? (For example, would/could the capability be hosted as part of the implementation contractor's systems or as part of the successful bidder's systems?)

A: The proposer shall provide the entire system and hosting. DNR will provide a VPN connection to proposer for data exchange.

Systems will be hosted at Shaw. This includes reporting functionality and also applications allowing remote/local access as needed for reporting and data entry by Shaw and DNR personnel.

39. Q: In reference to Enclosure 4:

In how many and what type of systems and supporting databases does underlying data reside at the implementation contractor?

Will the successful bidder have director, real-time access to these systems and data?

A: Yes

Does the underlying data include geographic location data that would support mapping through a Geographic Information System (GIS)? Or are the number of locations sufficientl7 small that this capability will not be needed?

A: Data will be hosted within a Microsoft SQL Server Database within the Shaw Network. All SEP and EECBG program data will be stored within single database, segregated, and secured as necessary. Remote data access will be provided by web applications on a Microsoft IIS web server. Reporting will

be in presented and created within Microsoft SQL Server Reporting Services, or data will be extracted from the database as needed in a format specified and acceptable on Recovery.gov and ARRA. All systems will be hosted at Shaw, however, some data will be pulled from the LA DNR SONRIS database to verify HELP loans that have already been granted and gather other necessary information.

40. Q: In reference to Enclosure 4:

Does DNR require or desire that the monitoring be performed in accordance with any particular standards, for example Government Auditing Standards?

A: DNR anticipates that the Governmental Auditing Standards will be considered when establishing the monitoring for this contract; however, we expect full coverage for all programs within both grants. This will be used to demonstrate monitoring on behalf of DNR. It is important that will meet all monitoring needs for the grant.

41. Q: In reference to Attachment A:

Has DNR received approved of its State Plan yet? Does it anticipate being able to pay the monthly bills of the successful vendor within 30 days of the invoice date?

A: Yes

Page 2 indicates that there is an allowance for indirect costs for the grant as a whole. Does the successful vendor's indirect costs play into this allowance, or is the whole amount of the vendor's fee considered a direct cost for the purposes of this grant?

A: The vendor's fee is considered a direct cost.

Is there a limit to the vendor's indirect costs? If so, what is that limit?

A: No indirect costs are allowed.

Page 18 indicates that there is not reimbursement for indirect costs. Does this apply to the successful vendor? Must the work for this grant be at cost or cost plus profit (but no indirect cost)?

A: The vendor is not allowed to charge indirect costs.

On page 22, it states that no funds may be expended on subcontractors until DOE approval is given. When does DNR anticipate that this will occur (after contract award)? Can work on this grant be postponed until DOE approval is garnered, as DOE will not reimburse for work performed before such approval is given?

A: DNR has obtained DOE approval for this program.

42. Q: How many entities will require monitoring/reporting verification?
- A: **That depends on how many participants are in the program.**
43. Q: Will the monitoring/auditing be limited to expenditures and the calculation of metrics, or does DNR expect the successful vendor to confirm the eligibility/appropriateness of expenditures and metrics (e.g. verify that each household was eligible to receive the assistance that it received)? Please elaborate on the extent to which monitoring is expected.
- A: **The successful vendor will verify that the payments were appropriate under the terms of the grant.**
44. Q: Have sub-recipients/contractors responsible for implementation of the grants been identified yet?
- A: **Yes - The Shaw Group.**
- When did they begin work?
- A: **The Contract effective date is 11/1/2009**
- Please provide a list of these entities and their sub-recipients/sub-contractors so that we may ensure there are no conflicts of interest.
- A: **One sub-contractor for the appliance rebate portion will be selected, other than that, Shaw is the only contractor. Local parish governments will also be participants in these grants.**
45. Q: Does DNR want the monitoring completed under any particular auditing standards, such as Government Auditing Standards?
- A: See Question 40